



QUEST CURRICULUM

The CCNY
Lifelong
Learning
Community

Spring
2026

SPRING 2026 CALENDAR

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

A Week	2-Feb	3-Feb	4-Feb	5-Feb
B Week	9-Feb	10-Feb	11-Feb	Lincoln's Birthday
A Week	President's Day	17-Feb	18-Feb	19-Feb
B Week	23-Feb	24-Feb	25-Feb	26-Feb
A Week	2-Mar	3-Mar	4-Mar	5-Mar
B Week	9-Mar	10-Mar	11-Mar	12-Mar
A Week	16-Mar	17-Mar	18-Mar	19-Mar
B Week	23-Mar	24-Mar	25-Mar	26-Mar
A Week	30-Mar	31-Mar	1-Apr	2-Apr
B Week	6-Apr	7-Apr	8-Apr	9-Apr

April 13–16: Quest Closed for Spring Break

A Week	20-Apr	21-Apr	22-Apr	23-Apr
B Week	27-Apr	28-Apr	29-Apr	30-Apr
A Week	4-May	5-May	6-May	7-May
B Week	11-May	12-May	13-May	14-May

Year-end Luncheon Friday 15-May

Cover Photo: Central Park, Spring • Photo Credit: Estelle Selzer, Quest Member

A SPRING 2026 COURSE CALENDAR

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Morning 10:30 – 12:00	Across the Universe	Science Clubhouse	Time: The Wonder of It	Beethoven: The Late Years
	It Ain't Just Rock 'n' Roll	Supreme Court	Shakespeare: <i>Hamlet</i>	Contemporary Poetry
		TheaterWorks		

Lunch

Afternoon 1:00 – 2:30	Honoré De Balzac: <i>Père Goriot</i>	Creative Writing Workshop	Cinema Quest: Current & Classic	Contemporary Short Stories
	Profiles in Courage	History of New York City	Timeless Writings: <i>Canterbury Tales</i>	Quester's Choice I
		Two Novels by Virginia Woolf	You Can Do PowerPoint	

B Week

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Morning 10:30 – 12:00	Give My Regards to Broadway	Artists & Their Work	American Upheavals	Earth: History
	Wonderful Books Out Loud	New & Classic Essays	Science & Scientists	Oral Interpretation of Poetry

Lunch

Afternoon 1:00 – 2:30	Great Directors, Producers	Film for Thought	Distinguished Guest Lecture Series	Eras in American History
	Great Plays	Quester's Choice II		Explorations in Philosophy & Literature
	Power of Play			Poet's Workshop

COURSES BY CATEGORY

ART & MUSIC

- Artists and Their Work
- It Ain't Just Rock and Roll
- Beethoven: The Late Years 1815-1827 **NEW**

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

- American Upheavals
- Supreme Court

HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY

- Eras in American History
- Explorations in Philosophy and Literature
- History of New York City
- New and Classic Essays
- Profiles in Courage
- Time: The Wonder of It

INTERDISCIPLINARY

- Distinguished Guest Lectures
- Earth: History
- Power of Play **NEW**
- Quester's Choice I
- Quester's Choice II
- Time: The Wonder of It

LITERATURE

- Contemporary Poetry
- Contemporary Short Stories
- Honoré de Balzac: *Père Goriot* **NEW**
- Oral Interpretation of Poetry
- Timeless Writings: *The Canterbury Tales* **NEW**
- Two Novels by Virginia Woolf **NEW**
- Wonderful Books Out Loud: *Slouching Toward Bethlehem* **NEW**

PERFORMING ARTS

- Cinema Quest: Current and Classic
- Film for Thought
- Give My Regards to Broadway
- Great Directors, Producers, Actors/Great Plays
- Shakespeare: *Hamlet* **NEW**

SCIENCE

- Across the Universe
- Science and Scientists
- Science Clubhouse

SOMETHING EXTRA

- Book Club: Creative Nonfiction
- Book Club: Fiction
- CultureQuest
- Déjeuner Français
- Noontime Mondays
- Social Events
- Sole Mates

WORKSHOPS

- Creative Writing Workshop
- Poets' Workshop
- TheaterWorks
- You Can Do PowerPoint

SPRING 2026 COURSES

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

*Coordinators: **Michael Hamberg**,
Marion Schultheis*

Across the Universe is perfect for anyone who has ever wondered what the Universe actually is, where it came from, how things work in it, and where the Universe is headed. Begin right here on Earth, soar through the Solar System, touch the stars and continue on towards the farthest reaches of the observable Universe. Prior knowledge or any technical expertise in math or science is not required. Just bring your questions and sense of wonder.

AMERICAN UPHEAVALS

*Coordinators: **Michael Wellner**,
Terri Hicks*

No matter for whom you voted in the last Presidential election, no one can disagree with the fact that we suddenly find ourselves living through an upheaval in nearly all aspects of our daily existence. In this class we will examine all the ways in which our lives will be dramatically changed in the immediate future, and perhaps for a long time to come.

ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

*Coordinators: **Linda Downs**,
Lynnel Garabedian, Bob Reiss,
Ellen Shapiro*

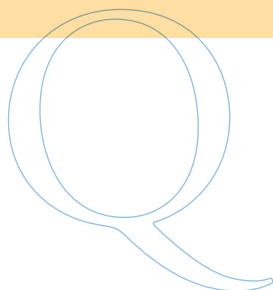
Artists and Their Work alternates a specific theme in the Fall semester with an open call for any topic on art during the Spring semester. This Spring, topics will range from Italian Renaissance to contemporary art.

BEETHOVEN: THE LATE YEARS 1815-1827 **NEW**

*Coordinators: **Arlene Hajinlian**,
Larry Shapiro, Jim Hopkins*

Beethoven's final period was a time of profound artistic and personal change and produced some of the most innovative and enduring music ever written. We will explore how his deepening deafness and personal struggles coincided with a shift towards more introspective, spiritual and formally experimental works, while continuing to champion Enlightenment ideals. Use of live and recorded music will enhance the course.

- A Week, Morning
- A Week, Afternoon
- B Week, Morning
- B Week, Afternoon



SPRING 2026 COURSES

CINEMA QUEST:

*Coordinators: **Howard Salik**,
Marian Friedmann, Vince Grosso*

Cinema Quest is a course designed for film enthusiasts who enjoy watching and discussing both contemporary and classic films. It is an excellent fit for those with limited technical skills, as our dedicated technical support team is available to assist participants before and during discussions. With the support of our coordinators, presenters will select a domestic, indie, or international film for a 30-minute discussion, delving into aspects such as the cast, directors, and storylines. Questers will receive information about how to watch the movies in advance.

CONTEMPORARY POETRY

*Coordinators: **Ellen Rittberg**,
Bernadette Cullen, Frieda Lipp,
Karen Millard*

We will explore important and well-regarded modern poets, their poems, and their place in the literary continuum/historical context. No previous knowledge of these poets is required. Our aim is to explore and engage with their poems and, in the process, gain a greater appreciation of their works.

CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES

*Coordinators: **Nancy Richardson**,
Mary Buchwald, Frieda Lipp*

This long-standing class discusses short stories from all over the world. At each class, two members volunteer to choose and present a story, copies of which are made available to everyone. The presenters give a brief background about the author and the story and then open the class to discussion.

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

*Coordinators: **Helen Safran**,
Judy Hampson, Donna Ramer*

Creative Writing offers both in-class exercises and an opportunity to share your prose, poetry, plays and essays written at home for comment and critique in a congenial atmosphere. Each class begins with a ten-minute writing warm-up inspired by a prompt, such as ice cream, a favorite teacher, or a memorable photograph. Other in-class writing might be related to the specific topic of the day: dialogue, openings, the senses, vivid description, or character development. All genres — science fiction, romance, mystery, memoir, comedy — are welcomed. Note: *This workshop ends at 3:00 pm.*

SPRING 2026 COURSES

DISTINGUISHED GUEST LECTURE SERIES

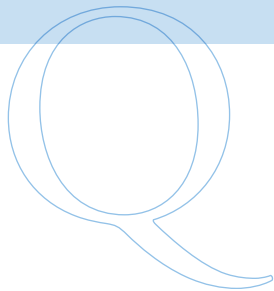
*Coordinators: Arlynn Greenbaum,
Estelle Selzer, Karen Levin, Bob Reiss*

This bimonthly Guest Lecture Series enhances the Quest program experience by inviting recognized experts in their fields to present on varied subjects. Past presentations have included discussions of global policy and political science, literature, theater arts, social science, and music.

EARTH: HISTORY

Coordinators: Judy Weis, Pete Weis

This semester we will cover the history of our planet from its formation, through the origin and evolution of life on Earth, culminating with the present era, which has been deemed the “Anthropocene” — because of the domination of one species, us. We will have a guest lecturer, a dinosaur specialist, to tell us about dinosaurs.



ERAS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

*Coordinators: Joy Sabella,
Bob Gottfried*

This course explores eras in American history that are distinct periods characterized by unique social, political, economic, and cultural developments. This semester, we will focus on the impact of immigration on the U.S. by exploring four distinct periods of major migrations: Colonial (1600s–1820), Old Immigration (1820–1889), New Immigration (1880–1920), and Modern Immigration (1965–present).

EXPLORATIONS IN PHILOSOPHY & LITERATURE

*Coordinators: Larry Shapiro,
Steve Allen, Bob Belfort*

Some of our sessions focus on how philosophy addresses current controversial issues; others focus on writings by classic or contemporary authors that address questions of perennial concern. All classes feature lively discussions of readings selected to stimulate ideas and provide insights into social relations and human nature.

-  A Week, Morning
-  A Week, Afternoon
-  B Week, Morning
-  B Week, Afternoon

SPRING 2026 COURSES

FILM FOR THOUGHT

*Coordinators: **Steve Allen**,
Lois Klein, Marsha Porcell,
Ellen Waldman*

In this course, we will see the best of contemporary short documentaries, dramas, comedies, and film excerpts. Films are selected for both their artistic merit and their ability to generate a lively discussion.

GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY

*Coordinators: **Peter Dichter**,
Arlynn Greenbaum*

The Broadway Musical, an American phenomenon, has been such a part of our lives that you probably remember the first musical you saw. During the run of our presentations, you will not only have a chance to reminisce but to also discover aspects of this unique theater genre that will make it even more enjoyable and entertaining. Your favorite songs? Entertainers? Shows? Composers? Whatever your favorites... you've got to be in the room where it happens!

GREAT DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS, ACTORS

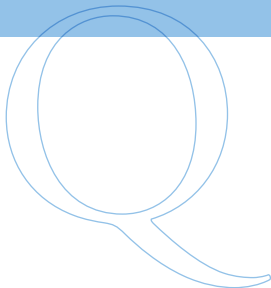
*Coordinators: **Wayne Cotter**,
Frieda Lipp, Roy Clary*

This course will take an in-depth look at some of the most influential talents of the stage and screen. Class members will be encouraged to provide insights and share personal memories. Great Directors, Producers, Actors alternates with the Great Plays course, sharing a room and time slot.

GREAT PLAYS

*Coordinators: **Roy Clary**,
Wayne Cotter, Frieda Lipp*

Important American and European plays are presented. Each session begins with a brief biography of the playwright followed by a "staged reading" of the play. The audience is encouraged to share their insights. Great Plays alternates with the Great Directors, Producers, Actors course, sharing a room and time slot.



SPRING 2026 COURSES

HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY

*Coordinators: **Ilene Winkler**,
Sandra Abramson, Michael Wellner*

This semester we will focus on the first half of the 20th century. Many of us grew up listening to stories from our parents and grandparents: the Great Migration and the Harlem Renaissance, the Roaring Twenties and Prohibition, the Grand Concourse, the garment industry and its unions, the opening of the Holland Tunnel and the George Washington Bridge, the Depression of the 1930s, and World War II. Now we will look back at this history to see how it has impacted the New York we live in today.

HONORÉ DE BALZAC: PÈRE GORIOT **NEW**

*Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz**,
Tatyana Chernomaz, Mary Ann Donnelly,
Andrea Irvine*

Balzac's *Père Goriot* captures the birth of modern life — a world driven by ambition, wealth, and self-invention. His insight into power, desire, and social climbing feels uncannily current. Reading Balzac is like seeing the blueprint of every novel that followed, and recognizing ourselves within it: calculating, yearning, endlessly adapting.

IT AIN'T JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL

*Coordinators: **Steve Koenig**,
Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly*

This course will examine a variety of musical genres and trends. Individual classes may focus on one artist or the links between artists spanning generations. Topics could include sessions on famous producers such as George Martin or Phil Spector, songwriting geniuses, rock music's influence on TV and film, the rock music industry, Prog Rock, or album cover art. Sessions will primarily focus on rock, folk, country, hip-hop, and the blues.

NEW & CLASSIC ESSAYS

*Coordinators: **Steve Allen**,
Bob Belfort, Nina Sanders,
Larry Shapiro*

Each week the course coordinators will pick one or two essays designed to provoke new perspectives, to ask us to question assumptions, and to encourage thoughtful discussion. Topics will range widely and will be drawn from publications such as *The Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Review of Books*, as well as some on-line only sources.

-  A Week, Morning
-  A Week, Afternoon
-  B Week, Morning
-  B Week, Afternoon

SPRING 2026 COURSES

ORAL INTERPRETATION OF POETRY

*Coordinators: **Joyce Hinote**,
Peter Dichter*

The human oral tradition goes back millennia, and it began with poetry. It was a way of communicating and telling stories about the world around us and who we are. In a fun, creative environment, we will continue this tradition as participants read aloud and interpret poetry and study meter, rhyme, alliteration, and other poetic elements that influence a poem's sound and meaning.

POWER OF PLAY **NEW**

*Coordinators: **Carole Blane**,
Candy Johnson, Joe Aboulafia*

Power of Play invites participants to examine play as a vital component of human experience. While play is often associated with childhood, this course explores its relevance for adults. Through a combination of lecture, discussion and fun, hands-on play activities, participants will investigate questions such as: What is play? Why do we play? How can play enhance personal and collective growth?

POETS' WORKSHOP

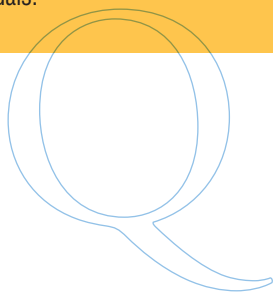
*Coordinators: **Judith Winn**,
Judy Hampson, Helen Saffran*

This workshop provides an opportunity to express your thoughts through the creative act of writing poems. You do not need prior experience in this medium. Participants share their writing with other members of the class and through constructive comments, develop their personal writing styles. Opportunities will be provided to discuss the meaning of the poems from the perspective of the authors and the readers.

PROFILES IN COURAGE

*Coordinators: **Wayne Cotter**,
Tracey Lee, Ken Sasmor*

Courage seems to be in short supply these days among many of our elected officials, academic leaders, and captains of industry. This course will explore the nature of courage and profile individuals who risked their personal safety for the greater good. The course will also examine what motivates these unique individuals.



SPRING 2026 COURSES

QUESTER'S CHOICE I QUESTER'S CHOICE II

*Coordinators: Mary Beth Yakoubian,
Vince Grosso*

Questers will choose a topic which they are excited about presenting and which audience members will appreciate. As the title indicates, it is Questers Choice! It can be on a subject the presenter has extensive knowledge of or a presentation that is new and needs to be thoroughly researched. This course is ideal for new members making their first presentation at Quest.

SCIENCE & SCIENTISTS

*Coordinators: Jim Brook,
Steve Allen, Judy Weis*

This course covers a wide range of scientific topics — and the stories of the women and men who have, in the past or present, engaged in the pursuit of knowledge about the world in which we live. No prior acquaintance with the subject is required. An active interest will do.

SCIENCE CLUBHOUSE

*Coordinators: Steve Allen,
Jim Brook, Gil Sanchez,
Marion Schultheis*

This course is a place where new developments in science can be explored. Our scope is broad — not just the physical and life sciences, but also psychology and cognitive science, medicine, and social sciences. Most sessions will be organized around an in-depth report on an important popular science book. Reading material for these books will be circulated well in advance and participants will have the choice of reading in advance or just attending. All sessions will also allow time for discussion of other science news.

SHAKESPEARE: HAMLET **NEW**

*Coordinators: Roy Clary
Jim Brook, Ellie Schaffer*

Written in 1600, *Hamlet* remains the most celebrated tragedy in the English language. Although it contains crowd pleasing scenes of ghosts and mayhem, its fame is more attributed to the mystery surrounding its main character: *Hamlet*. He presents a different face to each of us: hard and soft, cruel and gentle, brutal and angelic, like a lion and like a dove. Our exploration will endeavor to discover the truth or truths that explain the mystery of *Hamlet*. To aid our understanding, clips from several films will be shown. (The Folger Library edition is preferred.)

-  A Week, Morning
-  A Week, Afternoon
-  B Week, Morning
-  B Week, Afternoon

SPRING 2026 COURSES

SUPREME COURT

*Coordinators: **Michael Wellner**,
Sandra Abramson, Babette Ceccotti*

With the Supreme Court now composed of six Republican-appointed “conservative” justices, and just three “liberal” ones, and so many very urgent and critical issues being presented by the Trump presidency, the decisions of the Supreme Court are more urgent and important than perhaps any time in recent history. Join us as each class examines one or more cases before the Court and its decisions.

THEATERWORKS

*Coordinators: **Art Spar**,
Mary Ann Donnelly, Ruth Ward,
Arlynn Greenbaum*

In a creative and fun environment, participants will practice the full range of theater skills. Ten-minute scenes will be a prominent format for writers, editors, directors and actors to hone their skills. Improvisational exercises without scripts will be used to develop confidence on stage. Storytelling activities will be encouraged, and technology will be used to create videos and to support lighting, scenery, special effects, and the full range of theater crafts.

TIME: THE WONDER OF IT

*Coordinators: **Andrea Irvine**,
David Bartash, Marion Schulthies*

Think of “time” as our common starting point—and then watch it unfold in every direction. Each class brings something new: a dive into numbers, a spark from Tesla, a reflection on early man, a time capsule. Our presenters shape the theme to fit their passions, making every session unpredictable and engaging.

TIMELESS WRITINGS: THE CANTERBURY TALES **NEW**

*Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz**,
Mary Ann Donnelly, Judy Hampson,
Andrea Irvine*

This spring, we travel with Geoffrey Chaucer’s unforgettable band of pilgrims on their road to Canterbury. Each tale—comic, bawdy, tragic, moral, or slyly subversive—reveals a different slice of medieval life and human nature. We’ll read the tales in modern English, exploring how Chaucer’s sharp eye, humor, and empathy continue to speak to readers six centuries later. Discussions will highlight the storytelling contest, the variety of voices, and what this journey tells us about community, class, and timeless human behavior.

SPRING 2026 COURSES

TWO NOVELS BY VIRGINIA WOOLF NEW

*Coordinators: Lynnel Garabedian,
Sandy Kessler*

Virginia Woolf was one of the most influential writers of the 20th century. Her pioneering use of stream-of-consciousness narration to probe the complex interior life of characters was a major contribution to fiction. Her themes of time, memory, love, and identity are universal and meaningful today. We will read and discuss her two most acclaimed novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*.

YOU CAN DO POWERPOINT

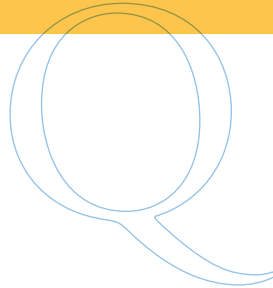
*Coordinators: Tamara Weinberg,
Tracey Lee*

Want to share your passion but don't know how to create a presentation? This workshop will be for Quest members to drop in as needed to learn basic PowerPoint skills such as starting a presentation, adding images and text, and embedding videos. After a brief PowerPoint orientation, attendees will get individual assistance with their presentations. Experienced PowerPoint users are welcome to join in to share their skills and learn more advanced techniques as time permits.

WONDERFUL BOOKS OUT LOUD: SLOUCHING TOWARD BETHLEHEM NEW

*Coordinators: Harriet Finkelstein,
Larry Shapiro, Ruth Ward*

When published in 1968, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* was critically acclaimed and cemented Joan Didion's reputation as a uniquely insightful cultural observer. For many readers, its themes of anxiety, societal fragmentation, and the search for meaning continue to resonate in the modern era. The writing is tight and scrappy; the work of Joan Didion is not simply prose, it is art. Join us as we revel in reading aloud *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*.



- A Week, Morning
- A Week, Afternoon
- B Week, Morning
- B Week, Afternoon

SPRING 2026 COURSES

SOMETHING EXTRA

BOOK CLUB: CREATIVE NONFICTION

Carole Blane, Debbi Honorof

Join our exciting new monthly lunchtime book club, where we will discuss creative nonfiction books. Creative nonfiction, also known as narrative nonfiction, is a genre that brings true stories to life through the techniques of fiction writing, including vivid descriptions, character development, and engaging narratives. These books are designed to both inform and entertain, presenting factual information in a compelling, novel-like manner. Together, we will delve into a wide range of topics, from history and science to society, travel, biography, and beyond, all through the lens of expertly crafted stories. We meet once a month in-person on Wednesday of the first B week of the month, from 12:10–12:55 pm.

BOOK CLUB: FICTION

Jan Goldstein, Susannah Falk Lewis, Joan Vreeland

The Quest Book Club reads a wide cross-section of novels by both new and more established authors, from this country and abroad, across a range of genres. The books chosen are not necessarily what you yourself might ordinarily pick up — think of it as a chance to discover something you didn't know you liked! We meet once a month in-person on Wednesday of the first A week of the month, from 12:10–12:55 pm.

CULTUREQUEST

Madeleine Brecher

The popular CultureQuest program offers tours of art galleries, current museum exhibitions, guided walks as well as other enriching adventures throughout the New York metro area. These events take place every month on selected Fridays and are presented either in-person or on zoom. The in-person programs are followed by a relaxing lunch to enjoy good food and conversation.

SPRING 2026 COURSES

SOMETHING EXTRA

DÉJEUNER FRANÇAIS

Ruth Ward, Donna Basile

Quel beau rêve — parler français à d'autres Questers pendant le déjeuner! Si vous parlez un peu français, rejoignez-nous pour des conversations sur des sujets choisis par nos participants, qui présenteront des mini-leçons et animeront des discussions sur des thèmes d'intérêt personnel et général. Bonne idée, n'est-ce pas? À bientôt!

SOCIAL EVENTS

Gale Spitalnik

The Social Committee brings Questers together for some exciting events such as wine & cheese receptions, holiday celebrations, and other events throughout the year. We look for opportunities to socialize and learn more about each other in a lively, friendly environment at our home away from home, 25 Broadway.

NOONTIME MEDLEY

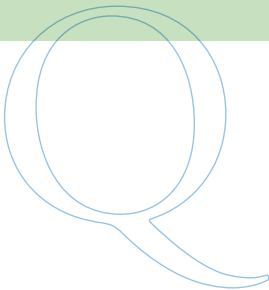
Sheryl Harawitz, Andrea Irvine

Mondays at noon are never the same. One week it's a quiz, another it's opera, or a look inside a museum. We've talked books, listened to musicians, even debated what AI can (and can't) do. Bring your lunch, your curiosity, and join in the mix. It's our favorite hour of the week—part coffee break, part salon, all Quest.

SOLE MATES

Andrea Irvine, Tamara Weinberg

Call it exercise, call it social-hour-on-foot. We stroll along the Hudson, swap stories, and usually end up somewhere with a menu—coffee, wine, or water, whatever fits the day. No pressure, no pace to keep—just fresh air and friendly faces. Gather at 2:45 p.m. by the seventh-floor elevators. Details always in NWAQ.



QUEST CURRICULUM

Founded in 1995 by a small group of active retirees, Quest is an all-volunteer, peer-learning center for anyone in the Tri-state area who is retired or semi-retired.

Members benefit by

- Learning & developing new interests
- Meeting new people & forming new relationships
- Exchanging ideas
- Social activities

And we keep members in the know through our monthly newsletter, *QNews*; NWAQ, weekly listings of classes; and two email communities. We also publish *QReview*, our annual literary and arts magazine that features the prose, poetry and art of our members.

A recent survey found that 96 percent of our newest members joined because they found the courses exceeded or met their expectations, and they appreciated the flexibility of being able to attend individual classes.

So no matter how you choose to participate, you will find Quest will provide a rewarding experience to enrich your life, intellectually and socially.



Scan the QR code for more information about Quest Membership.

For more information and to schedule a visit to sample our classes, contact us at:

Division of Interdisciplinary Studies
at the Center for Worker Education

The City College
of New York

Bowling Green Campus, 25 Broadway, 7th floor, New York, NY 10004

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